

PRESS RELEASE

Croatian Medical Journal
Zagreb University School of Medicine
Šalata 3b
10000 Zagreb
Croatia

Phone: ++385-1-4590-254

Fax: ++385-1-4590-222

Mail: dario.sambunjak@mef.hr

All articles published in the Croatian Medical Journal
are freely available at www.cmj.hr

Human metapneumovirus confirmed in Croatia

ZAGREB – Antibodies against human metapneumovirus (hMPV) were confirmed in more than three quarters of sera samples of Croatian citizens, showing that this recently discovered respiratory virus is equally prevalent in Croatia as in some other countries of the world. The report is published in the new issue of the *Croatian Medical Journal*.

Human metapneumovirus was first isolated in 2001 in the Netherlands, and it was proven that it causes acute respiratory tract infections in all age groups. Researchers from Croatian National Institute of Public Health, in cooperation with their colleagues from United States, explored the seroprevalence of hMPV in Croatian population. An indirect immunofluorescent assay was used to detect specific anti-hMPV antibodies in 137 sera samples from Croatian patients aged from 6 days to 51 years. A hundred and six (77.4%) samples were positive.

In this study, 81% of infants under 6 months had hMPV antibodies, suggesting the presence of transplacentally derived maternal antibodies. Seroprevalence was 18.7% in children aged between 6 months and 1 year, 45.5% in children aged 1-2 years, and 88.9% in persons aged 5-20 years. In this study, all subjects older than 20 years had anti-hMPV antibodies. These results were similar to the rate found in previous studies from Japan and Uruguay.

Corresponding author:

Sunčica Ljubin Sternak

Virology Department

Croatian National Institute of Public Health

Rockefellerova 12

10000 Zagreb, Croatia

sljsternak@hzjz.hr